

1985 - 86 was a very eventful season as the Club had qualified for the Gola League (Alliance Premier) and started quite well. A very good F.A. Cup run saw Colchester United from Division Four visit Loakes Park in the First Round. Two goals in the first-half by Mark West and Simon Read paired Wycombe with Chelmsford in Round Two. Another win at Loakes Park sent us to York City in Round Three where unluckily we lost 2-0.

A prolonged tussle with Leek Town in the F.A. Trophy then put the skids under the team. We faced Altrincham on the last day of April in a desperate League position and only 600 turned up to see Wycombe fight for survival. Altrincham had reached Wembley in the Trophy and put out a weakened side. It was one of those games - had Altrincham played without a goalkeeper Wycombe wouldn't have scored, and when Graham Pearce beat Gary Lester with a 25 yard back pass on 88 minutes Wycombe were doomed. Relegation was confirmed when four teams on 36 points left Wycombe's goal difference the worst of the four. That season the experimental system of two points for a home win and three for an away win did not help. The following season three points for a straight win was introduced.

During 1986 agreement was reached between the Wanderers Board and the Hospital Governing body to re-locate the Club. Subject to discussion with the local council, Wycombe Wanderers would leave Loakes Park to enable a re-development programme, and move to a purpose-built stadium at Sands.

The following season Wycombe took the Isthmian League Championship and were back in the renamed

Alliance Premier (G.M. Vauxhall Conference) for the 1987/88 competition. Scarborough had been the very first team to win election to the Football League as Champions of the Gola League and Lincoln City became the first side to make the drop. Alan Gane, who had replaced Paul Bence as manager following the York City F.A. Cup defeat, had himself been replaced by another former player, Peter Suddaby, and when Lincoln City came to Loakes Park they were determined to get back into the Football League under any circumstances. A 2-1 defeat by Lincoln kept Wycombe in the basement area of the League until Suddaby was dismissed and Jim Kelman was appointed in February 1988. Rebuilding the team was the main priority for survival in the Conference. This was achieved and a new look Wanderers prepared for the coming season. Newport County changed places with Lincoln City and began to struggle due to lack of finance and huge debts.

Wycombe had risen to third position in the table when leaders Kettering came to Loakes Park for a vital League clash. The game attracted the largest Conference gate recorded at Loakes Park, (4,900), but Wycombe lost 1-0 with a second half header from Cohen Griffiths. Newport were expelled from the Conference in early April and that ended Wycombe's chances of the Championship when six points and ten goals were deducted from the home win (5-0) and the away win (5-3) in Wales. Kettering faltered at the last hurdle to allow Maidstone United into the Football League.

Darlington then entered the Conference ranks as the 92nd side in the Football League, replacing Maidstone. Making an early visit to

Loakes Park, in the ground's final season, they left as 1-0 winners with a second-half goal from David Cork. In November 1989 Loakes Park became the first non-League ground ever to stage a Women's International when England met Italy on a wet and windy evening when 1,200 turned out to see a highly skilled game ending in a 1-1 draw. A disastrous F.A. Trophy defeat 3-1 at Loakes Park by Metropolitan Police from two Leagues below signalled the end of Jim Kelman's managerial spell that had transformed Wycombe into a Conference side and former Nottingham Forest and Northern Ireland International Martin O'Neill took over. Consolidating the League position to finish in tenth place after a very shaky start meant the Club would leave Loakes Park having established themselves at the very top of the non-league ladder.

Farewell Loakes Park

Bank Holiday, Monday, 7th May 1990 was the date chosen for the very last competitive match to be played at Loakes Park. Through manager Martin O'Neill's connections, plus those of Director and T.V. sports commentator Alan Parry and the Club Secretary, Alan Hutchinson, a team of past internationals were gathered together led by the ex-Manchester United superstar, George Best. A party mood prevailed as a crowd of some 4,000 saw a feast of George Best magic and goals galore as the International XI beat a Wycombe side 8-4, the proceedings being halted temporarily by the intervention of a male streaker during the second-half. When referee John Martin blew the whistle for the very last time at Loakes Park 95 years of history came to an end. The great games, great players and great

clubs had passed, along with the famous sloping pitch, into history, to live in the memory for ever.

The two teams who took part in the Farewell game:

Wycombe Wanderers: John Granville, Matt Crossley, Simon Stapleton, Paul Franklin, Andy Kerr, Kevin Durham, Dave Carroll, Martin Lambert, Mark West, Martin Blackler, Steve Guppy.

Subs: Nicky Evans, Ricky Pearson.

International XI: Jim McDonough, Joe Kinnear, Mark Lawrenson, Alan MacDonald, Glyn Creaser, John McClelland, Danny Wilson, Gerry Armstrong, John Robertson, Robert Thorpe, George Best.

Subs: Andy Robinson, Spencer Tuckerman, Alan Parry, Martin O'Neill, Nazim Bashir, Warren Clark.



13th April 1987 - Promotion is clinched back to the G.M. Vauxhall Conference.

WYCOMBE'S GREATEST?

by Allan Robson

Len Worley played at outside-right for Wycombe Wanderers for 15 years from 1954-1969. During this time Len received Isthmian League and Berks & Bucks Senior Cup Winners medals, he represented the Isthmian League and Middlesex Wanderers, played for the Great Britain Olympic team and won seven full caps for the England Amateur team, the first at the age of 19. He also played in Division One of the Football League with Charlton Athletic and Tottenham Hotspur.

Len recalls the two highlights of his football career:-

"One has got to be my debut for Spurs when I played in the same front line as the great John White. But the best must be when Wycombe played Corinthian Casuals in the Amateur Cup Semi-Final at Highbury in 1956-57. We were at the last hurdle and a crowd of about 26,000 saw us come back from 0-1 down to win 4-2. We finished that game with only eight fit men and I managed to score two goals.

Other things that stick in my mind though is the sharpness of Tony

Horseman in the six-yard box and the unsung heroes such as Jackie Tomlin, Dave Thomas and Mick Hodges."

Every man has disappointments though....

"I've got two major regrets. The biggest is not accepting Tottenham's offer to go professional. Until I die I will never know whether I could have reached the very top of my craft and indeed, whether I ever reached my maximum potential in terms of skill. I will always wish I had the guts to have taken that opportunity.

But a very clear second is my regret at leaving Wycombe Wanderers. Brian Lee wanted to play four men up front, I was 32 years old and he thought my time was up. Wycombe was the biggest club in the South of England with the best supporters and biggest crowd. I can tell you that I literally cried as I walked out of the ground for the last time - I loved Wycombe Wanderers."

Len Worley didn't give football up on leaving Loakes Park. He went on to play for Slough Town,

Wealdstone, Hayes, Chesham and continued in Sunday League soccer until he was 40.

As a Wycombe Wanderer Len was married with three sons, trained as a Quantity Surveyor and was a director of a property development company. Today, he lives in a superb house in the Chalfonts having had his own property development business for 18 years. He is also a partner in a sports retailing business. Len plays a great deal of tennis (which he feels helped him considerably to get over the shock of leaving Wycombe) and represents Buckinghamshire in the veteran section. He still weighs the same as he did when he played football at his peak.

Having stayed away from Loakes Park after he finished playing, Len is now finding himself a quite frequent visitor to Adams Park.

We hope we can give him some of the enjoyment he gave to thousands of Wanderers supporters throughout his playing days at Loakes Park.

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Loakes Park 1895 - 1990
Adams Park 1990 -

A POTTED HISTORY OF LOAKES PARK

1895	Loakes Park "loaned" to Wycombe Wanderers by Lord Carrington. First match played 7th September.	1948	Loakes Park hosts the England v Wales British Youth Championship (4-2)	1978	John Reardon leaves Wycombe Wanderers.
1896	The Club joins the Southern League.	1951	A full-time coach was appointed in James McCormack.	1980	Mike Keen is appointed Team Manager and acquires Gary Lester, Bob Dell and George Borg.
1897	Loakes Park is leased for 14 years. A new headquarters (The Swan Hotel) and the first groundsman (Bill Trinder) was appointed.	1952	Sid Cann joins the Club as coach.	1981	Mark West scores the only goal to give High Wycombe and District Schools team the English Schools Trophy against Sunderland at Loakes Park. Brian Lee is elected Chairman.
1900	The Club plays at Wycombe Abbey Park whilst Loakes Park is levelled off.	1956	Wycombe are champions of the Isthmian League with a record 12 points margin and as top scorers. The Ugandan touring team are beaten 10-1 by the Wanderers - they later beat the England Amateur team.	1982	The Club is defeated in the FA Trophy Semi-Final Second Leg 0-3 after holding Altrincham to a 1-1 draw in the away leg.
1902	Wycombe wins the Berks & Bucks Senior Cup 3-0 against Slough.	1957	Wycombe lose 3-1 to Bishop Auckland in the Amateur Cup Final at Wembley in front of a 90,000 crowd and retained the Isthmian League title.	1983	Isthmian League Champions for the seventh time and Wycombe turn down the opportunity of joining the Alliance Premier League due to increased expenses. A non-league club record of 11 consecutive seasons appearing in the First Round Proper of the FA Cup was achieved by facing Chelmsford City.
1903	A four tier stand for 400 people with dressing rooms is erected on the top side.	1958	The Loakes Park gates were officially opened before the first Amateur International at Loakes Park was played (England v South Africa).	1984	Wycombe finished in third position in the Isthmian League but as Sutton (Champions) refused and Worthing (runners-up) did not have an adequate ground Wycombe were offered, and accepted, a place in the Gola League. Wycombe played a Centenary match against first Division Leicester City 0-0 at Loakes Park. A Centenary Room was opened for the new "30 Club" and a new kitchen constructed. Sir Stanley Rous presided at the Club's Centenary Dinner and unveiled a new Honours Board.
1908	The Club enters the Great Western Suburban League.	1960	Wycombe reach the Second Round Proper in the FA Cup for the first time, losing 5-1 to Fourth Division Watford.	1986	The Club reached the Third Round Proper of the FA Cup against York but were relegated from the Gola League on goal difference in the first season. Agreement was reached, subject to planning approval, to relocate to Sands.
1909	Wycombe win the Berks & Bucks Senior Cup without conceding a goal. Wycombe's highest recorded win 18-1 against Staines.	1962	Tony Horesman joins Wycombe.	1987	Promotion back to the G.M. Vauxhall Conference League. Wycombe Wanderers Football Club limited was formed under a new Board of Directors.
1920	Wycombe Wanderers become Spartan League Champions.	1963	Floodlights were erected and used for the first time in beating Enfield 3-1.	1988	The Club's planning application at Sands was won on appeal. Ivor Beeks took over as Chairman and Jim Kelman became Team Manager on a full-time basis.
1921	Wycombe Wanderers (and Wimbledon) join the Isthmian League and finish in 8th place. Reg Boreham becomes the first Wycombe player to win an Amateur International cap when he played for England against Ireland.	1967	Wycombe finally lose 3-2 against Bedford Town in the First Round Proper of the FA Cup after 6½ hours play. Tony Horesman scores a record 76 goals in one season.	1989	The Club's best ever League position - fourth in the GM Vauxhall Conference. A ladies team was formed and Wycombe Wanderers Lions were adopted.
1922	The Wycombe Memorial Hospital Cup is established and the Wanderers beat Tufnell Park 4-1.	1968	Brian Lee is appointed as coach.	1990	Martin O'Neill, ex-Northern Ireland Captain was appointed Team Manager. Loakes Park was vacated on 14th May.
1923	The main stand was extended at both ends and new dressing rooms were opened. A. Fryer became the first Wycombe player to tour with the Middlesex Wanderers.	1969	The selection committee was disbanded and Brian Lee is given full managerial powers. John Reardon joins the Club as assistant manager.		
1924	Wycombe are top scorers in the Isthmian League.	1970	Viv Busby joins Luton Town and Peter Suddaby joins Blackpool.		
1925	"Bunny" Hooper resigned his position as Club Secretary after 27 years.	1972	The Isthmian League title is won for the third time.		
1931	Wycombe Wanderers win the Amateur Cup beating Hayes 1-0 before 32,489 spectators at Highbury.	1974	First Division leaders Middlesbrough were held to a goalless draw in the FA Cup Third Round in front of a 12,000 crowd and ITV's Big Match cameras. The replay was lost 1-0 in the final seconds before a 30,000 crowd.		
1932	A stand was erected at the bottom side of Loakes Park and Wycombe became the first amateur club with stands on both sides of the ground. Wycombe reach the first round proper of the FA Cup for the first time losing 4-2 against Gillingham.	1975	Wycombe win the League for the Fourth time in five seasons with only one caution all season. The Club is expelled from the Berks & Bucks Cup for snubbing the committee officers. Wycombe Wanderers represent English non-League football in the Anglo-Italian Trophy and the Anglo-Italian Semi-Professional Tournament, winning the former against A.C. Monza. Wycombe lose a 52 match unbeaten home run to Slough Town.		
1935	The Club is forced to seek re-election to the Isthmian League.	1976	Brian Lee resigns as Team Manager and Ted Powell is appointed.		
1943	Mr G.T. Miles, President, Chairman and Treasurer for 46 years, died.				
1946	Wycombe finish the season with an average of 6½ goals per game.				
1947	Frank Adams, former player, captain and committee member, hands over Loakes Park as a gift to the Club.				

ADAMS PARK

A DEVELOPMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY

by Allan Robson

Having explored numerous potential sites for a new stadium as early as the mid sixties, Wycombe Wanderers and its Trustees were delighted when a developer identified a suitable site, then owned by Sir Francis Dashwood, on the outskirts of the town. On Christmas Eve 1985 the then Chairman, Brian Lee, signed an agreement whereby, subject to planning consent being granted, developers would fund a new stadium which had to be completed in all respects before the Club was required to leave Loakes Park.

The new site was on Green Belt land and classified as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the required planning consent was refused. The Club appealed against the decision and on 11th March 1988 received notice from the Department of the Environment that its appeal had been upheld - the move was on!

In September 1988 full consent was granted by Wycombe District Council and Brian Lee resigned as Chairman of the Board to be appointed full-time Development Director on a two year contract. Having drawn up specifications for the proposed stadium it was soon to become apparent that soaring costs would not allow the individual design to be progressed and a new design was created based on a pre-cast concrete frame system.

In April 1989 contractors commenced earthworks to form a level site and it was found necessary to lease adjacent land upon which 65,000 cubic metres of chalk could be deposited. The next task was to divert the water main and main foul sewer, which ran through the site, at a cost of £86,000. By the end of July the formation of the chalk pitch was complete with five miles of drainage pipes and a 40 "pop-up" head watering system, to be serviced by a 1000 gallon tank, installed.

Work began on foundations for the stands and terraces in August. Concrete frames were erected and the roof cladding set on, which then gave the internal

building works, started in October, protection from the weather. As this method of construction does not require load-bearing walls no separate foundations are required to support them and construction is more speedy. The terraces and stand were completed in January 1990. February saw the commencement of external work and car park and although the Club vacated Loakes Park on 14th May the internal and external works and landscaping were completed only in July. 9th August 1990 saw the first game at Adams Park - a 1-1 draw between Wycombe Wanderers and the Littlewoods Cup holders, Nottingham Forest. The last contractors left the site in October, 18 months after work had commenced.

The main stand extends 102 metres along one side of the pitch and has seven terraced rows seating 1,267 and providing press box, police control and hospital broadcast facilities. To the rear a 15 metre deep structure provides offices, "The Centre Spot" public house, Board Room, Banquet Suite capable of seating 240 people for dinner dances or 300 for conferences, a smaller room for 100, two smaller rooms catering for 20-30, changing rooms, remedial gymnasium and two physiotherapy rooms. The stand on the opposite side of the pitch is 108 metres long with 16 standing terraces which can be converted to accommodate seven rows of seating. The end stands are 66 metres long and provide 16 levels of standing accommodation. All of these stands are unsupported at the front giving an uninterrupted view of the pitch and are all front loading.

Separate buildings at all corners of the ground provide turnstile entrances/exits, tea bars and toilets. A shop, ticket office and flat are also catered for in the double storey corner building.

The only grant available for the new development was £50,000 from the Football Trust as a contribution towards changing rooms, the gymnasium and pitch. Sponsorship of the various function

rooms from local companies however, helped significantly and our grateful thanks goes to Ercol Furniture Ltd, Keen and Toms Partnership Ltd, Joynson Holland & Co Ltd, Verco Office Furniture Ltd, Monty Seymour and The Howland Group.

Adams Park is not only the home of Wycombe Wanderers but it is also a community facility. The Banquet and Conference suites are utilised by local businesses for dinner dances, seminars, exhibitions etc, by individuals for wedding receptions, birthday and anniversary parties and by clubs and societies for their meetings. Ballroom dancing, aerobics and keep fit classes are also planned for local residents.

The gymnasium is utilised by a local company at lunch-time and in the evenings for the benefit of their employees and the medical rooms allow a sports injuries clinic to be operated by a chartered physiotherapist for public use.

The leasehold land adjacent to the car park was acquired with the ultimate aim of producing a floodlit synthetic training pitch. Planning applications were made and rejected in 1990 and a further application, amended to incorporate 200 car park spaces was submitted in February 1991. When this facility becomes available Wycombe Wanderers will be able to develop a Community sports programme. The local hockey club are anxious to join in this venture and the club's own netball and soccer teams will, of course, be able to take advantage of the facilities.

The development of football for local youngsters will also be an important feature of the facility. Adams Park was dreamt about for 20 or so years and took almost five years to bring to fruition from signing the agreement. Hopefully, the careful planning which went into the specification and design of Adams Park will allow the facilities to take Wycombe Wanderers into the Football League, the 21st century and perhaps more importantly, the local community.



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THE CLUB AS A BUSINESS

by Allan Robson, Commercial Manager

When we start talking about commercialism in football it is important to remember that what we now know as "non-league" was as recently as 1975 referred to as "amateur" football. Although this, of course, relates to the status of the players the commercial or business side of the club has generally followed along.

The earliest commercial feature introduced at Wycombe was, of course, the match programme which was introduced in season 1919-20 as a single sheet and sold at 1d. Soon after the programme became twice the size and gave the opportunity to attract advertising revenue from local business which would more than compensate for the cost of printing. Today our match programme stands alone in the GM Conference at a selling price of £1.00 but even so the sale of programmes only just about breaks even on the cost of production.

With gates falling from 10-12,000 in the 1950's when players were not paid to 1-2,000 in the 1980's when wages were all important it was essential to raise funds away from the pitch. In 1975 the government produced legislation which would change the face of lotteries nationwide and from such time onwards Wycombe's lottery became the mainstay of the Club. Most people who read this article will inevitably know someone who has helped the Club sell its lottery tickets at some time. The number of agents over the years have run into the thousands but for much of this time under guidance of successive lottery and commercial managers the club are indebted to two people who are to many "Mr and Miss Lottery" - John Simmonds and Rena Frontalski - and I for one am eternally grateful for their support in my time here.

Another principal area of commercial activity is that of ground board advertising and if you glance around the stadium you see a "Who's Who" of business local to High Wycombe. Our progress to the 80 advertising boards we have today, colourful and neatly presented lends much to the attractive and interesting atmosphere of the ground.

Today, in 1991, there is not much that the Division One clubs do in commercial terms that we do not do ourselves. Matchday and ball sponsorships, Leagueline members clubs, junior supporters clubs, telephone information lines, fixture cards and calendars which carry advertising, matchday mascots, matchday raffles, club souvenirs and merchandise - all of these methods of attracting revenue from different categories of people have now been introduced, but there will always be activities which are fashionable for a particular time and the Sportsman's Dinners are currently running high on the list of "earners". Wycombe have been fortunate in having Alan Parry, the TV sports commentator, connected with the club and with his contribution we have gained a reputation second to none in this area with speakers such as Jack Charlton, Tommy Docherty, Jim Watt, Bobby Robson, Denis Law, George Best, Sir Stanley Matthews and Gary Lineker.

General sponsorship, however, is the area which has shown the largest growth in recent years as the more local businesses realise that they too can enjoy the same sort of benefits which the likes of Canon, Barclays Bank, Rumbelows, Leyland Daf etc all enjoy with their "Mega-bucks" sponsorship of national competitions. Wycombe's first club sponsor was the now non-existent motor dealer Norman Reeves who were succeeded by Trend Communications and currently Verco Office Furniture Ltd with whom we enjoy a tremendous association. Indeed Roger Vere and Alan Davies, directors of the company, are as supportive individually as the company is to the club as a whole, seldom missing a home match. Verco have been pleased with the company's higher profile, not only in Wycombe, but throughout the country where the team travel or the club has contacts and have been especially pleased with the positive effect our involvement has had with their work force, which, like many others, has many Wycombe supporters.

Over the past couple of seasons,

however, we have managed to attract the support and sponsorship of many other businesses in a very successful way. Although I am unable to mention them all, the following companies make a valuable contribution to Wycombe Wanderers today:-

Davenport Vernon - provide me with the free use of a car

Midland Bank - sponsor our Junior Blues Club

P K Graphics - sponsors of our Youth Team

Walters Microsystems - sponsor our Players Kits

Clarke Whitehill - sponsor our Sportsmen's Dinners

Harrison & Sons - sponsor our Hospital Radio Broadcast link

MFI Furniture Centres - sponsors of our Matchday Mascots and Family Stand

Browns Ford Centre - provide Martin O'Neill with his car

One area of commercialism where we fall far behind the Football League is on TV fees and the reason is obvious. Having said that this season we collected £7,500 for the BBC broadcast of our FA Cup Third Round match against Peterborough United - hopefully this will be the beginning of a great deal of money which will start winging its way from the TV companies. Today a football club cannot function without a successful commercial operation because matchday revenue just cannot cover the huge costs involved in maintaining the stadium and attracting and paying good players. Every now and then I think to myself that it is I, not Martin O'Neill or Mark West, that is the most important person at Wycombe Wanderers. Then I remember that without the team my department would have no purpose and, indeed, without the unyielding support and help I get from hundreds of ardent Wycombe fans I would not be able to function. Then, after all, it is the people that make Wycombe Wanderers a great club.

THE HISTORY OF OUR MATCH PROGRAMME

by Alan Hutchinson

Collecting football programmes is very big business nowadays with dealers, fairs and shops at every League ground, right down to a trestle table with cardboard boxes stuffed with them at the smallest non-league set-ups.

The history of the programme is very simple. A single sheet detailing the players and officials, plus date, venue and kick-off time was the norm upon its inception. Today we see the magazine-style productions from the Football League in full colour, with pages of text, selling for the average £1.00. Outside the First and Second Divisions the style and cost vary according to the support and financial position of the club. The larger proportion of smaller Football League clubs and the entire non-league clubs use the programme as a source of revenue through selling advertising space to local organisations. If we take our club and look at the development over 106 years of existence we will see how our own progression follows the patterns described above.

The earliest example I have come across was issued for a Spartan League game at Loakes Park for 1920-21, the last season before being elected to the Isthmian League. These programmes are fascinating items, a single sheet of paper printed both sides and folded in half to give the appearance of four pages. The team line-up would appear in the centre with small adverts around the outside. As for the information, there is no indication of the year or season, no time of kick-off and only the referee is listed - linesmen are not named.

On the back of one particular programme there are details of the Wanderers Cricket team who were due to start playing the following week, complete with fixture list. Another lists the teams that had won the Berks & Bucks Cup on five previous occasions. At the time only Charlie Tilbury (who became groundsman) and "Bunny" Hooper (who became Secretary) had played in the first four winning finals of 1902, 1909, 1910 and 1913. The local printers, Freer & Hayter, had provided the programmes from those early days and upon the Clubs' election to the Isthmian League, a visual change took place in accordance with the rules of the competition. The Isthmian League was the Premier Division of the Amateur game and like the Conference today had hard and fast rules about playing standards,

ground facilities and presentation of programmes. We now see a completely changed format, a much larger, long slender issue with bigger adverts and more information, and whereas the previous Spartan programmes cost 1d, the new publication was 2d, and although unnumbered had a larger print run as the crowds increased to see a higher standard of football. By the late 1920's the front cover contained a view of Loakes Park and was folded twice into the centre. This style continued right up until 1937 when the format was cut down to 7" x 5" and stapled in the centre to provide eight pages of mainly adverts and some forthcoming information provided by the Club Secretary. This format continued until the outbreak of the Second World War when football terminated. Although the club took part in the Great Western Combination during the war, programmes do not appear to have been issued for any matches at Loakes Park, but I do possess a copy of a league game played at Henley in 1940.

When football resumed in 1946 paper was in extremely short supply and programmes did not re-appear until 1947 when Freer & Hayter were able to allocate a proportion of their allowance for this use. The format returned to that of 1920, a small single sheet, priced 2d with the barest details, no advertising and numbered for the first time. However, a special Souvenir Programme was produced for the game when Frank Adams handed over Loakes Park to the club - again a single folded sheet, but 10" x 8" in size and on glossy paper.

The famous Amateur Cup quarter final against St. Albans in February 1950 brought about the biggest change in style, presentation and colour which was to last up until 1963 when the floodlights were installed. We now see a smart looking cover with the club emblem and list of officials, lots of boxed advertising inside with a well laid-out team sheet in the centre, all done on a tasteful light blue paper with dark blue type. This particular game still holds the record for the largest crowd at Loakes Park - 15,850, for which 10,000 programmes were printed, all being sold on the day at 2d each. Apart from various cover changes either showing league tables or a chart of home and away fixtures for the season, the programme changed very little. The cover price

did go to 3d in 1952 and remained at that price until 1964 when it went up by 1d to 4d.

Over the years a number of special issues have been produced. In 1957 a special was done to commemorate the club reaching Wembley and in 1963 a souvenir issue for the inauguration of the floodlights was most striking in light blue and dark blue stripes with a number of black and white pictures inside depicting the history of the club, priced at 1/- (one shilling). For the following seasons various forms of front cover were introduced to attempt to give the programme an interesting look as crowds shrank to their former levels when television and other forms of entertainment cut away the gate figures. There were occasions during the 1970's when gates did increase. This was due to particular runs in the F.A. Cup and F.A. Amateur Cup. The F.A. Cup saw Newport County, Peterborough and Bournemouth visit Loakes Park, culminating in the great occasion of January 1975 when Middlesbrough, who were then leaders of Division One, escaped with a nil-all draw in the 3rd round. A special programme was issued and is a collectors item today.

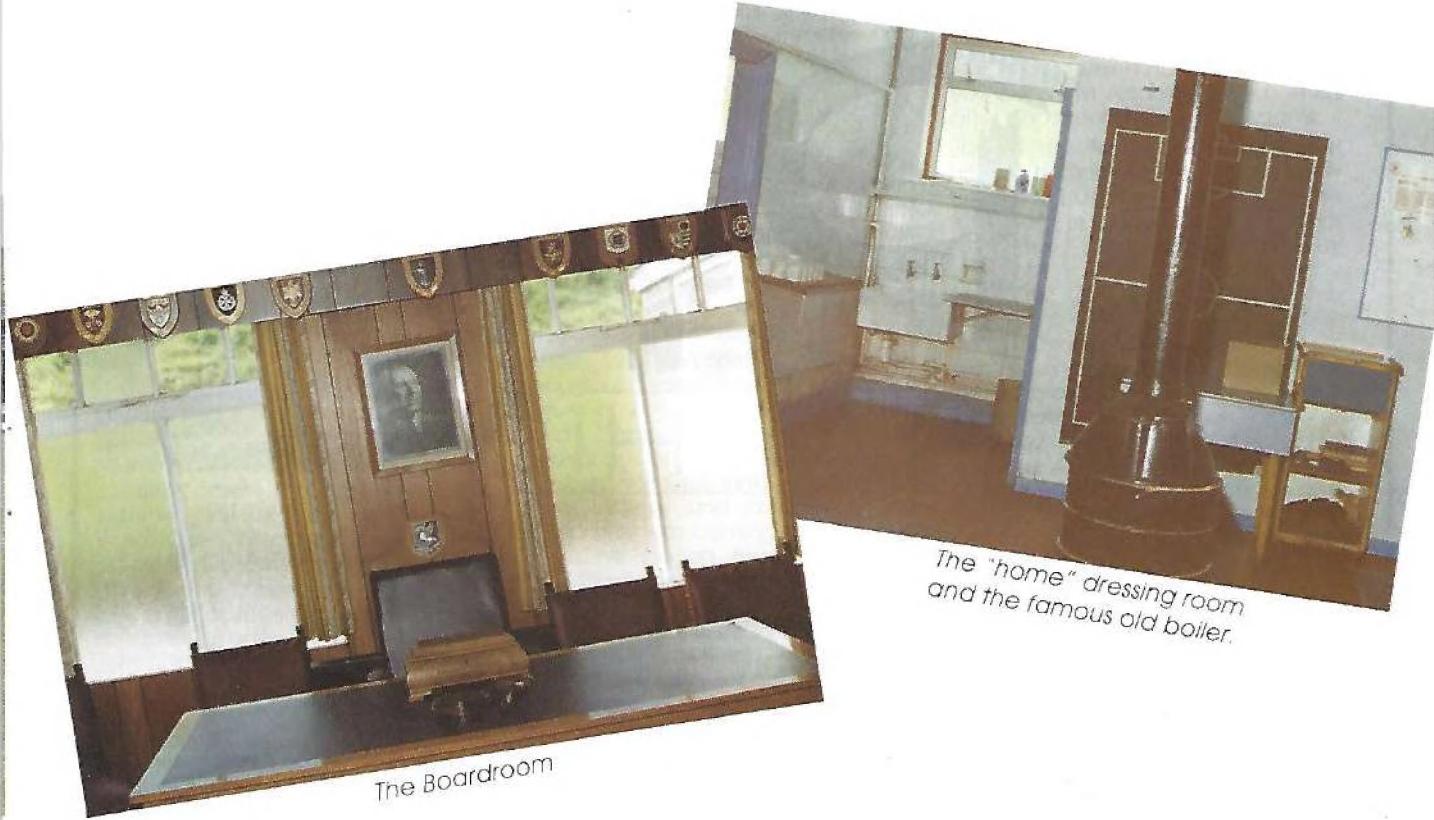
We are no longer part of the old amateur game - we are semi-professionals playing in a brand new stadium catering for a different kind of public. No doubt in 20 years time our current match day programme will become a collectors item just like our 1931 Amateur Cup Final programme which now sells for around £150. The 'programme' for the Trophy semi-final 1st leg at Altrincham in 1981 goes for around £10 as the printers were on strike and only 250 single sheet programmes photocopied by Altrincham were available. The Wanderers appearance at Newport, season 1987/88 was the last match played on that ground and copies of the programme are changing hands at £8.00 each. All a far cry from the single team sheet with no season, year or time of kick-off.

To bring ourselves right up to date we must mention the programme produced for the final game at Loakes Park. A colour picture of the ground on the cover, packed with the history of the club during its life at the ground, plus the opposing team line up, full of great international names of the past, including George Best, which cost only £1.



A selection of programmes from Loakes Park matches.

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1989 / 1990 - THE STATISTICS

DATE	OPPONENTS	ATTEND.	COMPETITION	VENUE	RESULT	H/T	LEAGUE POS	GOALSCORERS
Aug 26	Northwich Victoria	740	GMVC	A	L 0-3	0-2	19	Robinson 32
Aug 28	Altrincham	2078	GMVC	H	D 1-1	1-0	20	
Sep 2	Darlington	2620	GMVC	L	D 0-1	0-0	21	
Sep 6	Welling United	910	GMVC	A	D 0-0	0-1	21	
Sep 9	Stafford Rangers	1137	GMVC	A	L 0-1	0-1	21	
Sep 16	Baldock Town	671	FAC 1Q	A	W 2-0	0-0	-	West 70, A Kerr 89
Sep 19	Enfield	1001	GMVC	H	W 5-3	2-3	20	Carroll 15, Stapleton 20, 74, West 67 (pen), Gipp 84
Sep 23	Kidderminster Harriers	1913	GMVC	A	D 3-3	0-2	20	West 72, 84, J Kerr 89
Sep 26	Fisher Athletic	1850	GMVC	H	W 6-1	3-0	18	Stapleton 17, West 40, 47, 71, Gipp 29, 53
Sep 30	Boreham Wood	1460	FAC 2Q	A	W 3-1	1-0	19	A Kerr 42, J Kerr 66, 89
Oct 3	Kettering Town	2405	GMVC	H	L 0-1	0-0	17	Robinson 3, Crossley 46, Durham 55, West 63 (pen), Gipp 73
Oct 7	Runcorn	1885	GMVC	A	W 5-0	1-0	17	Durham 9
Oct 14	Gravesend & Northfleet	1561	FAC 3Q	H	D 1-1	1-1	-	Guppy 95
Oct 17	Gravesend & Northfleet	840	FAC 3QR	A	D 1-1	0-0	17	Durham 37
Oct 21	Telford United	1838	GMVC	H	W 3-1	1-0	-	J Kerr 44, Carroll 80, Evans 87 (pen)
Oct 23	Gravesend & Northfleet	1205	FAC 3Q2R	A	W 3-0	1-0	17	Evans 63
Oct 28	Stafford Rangers	953	FAC 4Q	A	L 1-4	0-2	-	West 62
Nov 4	Charley	687	GMVC	H	L 0-1	0-0	19	Guppy 80
Nov 7	Yeovil Town	687	GMVC	A	L 1-2	0-1	19	Guppy 2, Durham 32, Evans 49, Carroll 65
Nov 11	Boston United	1659	GMVC	H	W 1-0	0-0	19	Carroll 24, Evans 33
Nov 18	Barrow	1673	GMVC	A	W 4-0	2-0	14	Franklin 66
Nov 25	Yeovil Town	1655	GMVC	H	L 2-4	2-4	17	Evans 47, 67, Durham 55
Dec 2	Merthyr Tydfil	2212	GMVC	A	L 1-2	0-2	17	Lambert 55
Dec 9	Northwich Victoria	1548	GMVC	H	D 3-3	0-1	17	Durham 41, Guppy 57
Dec 16	Barnet	1397	GMVC	A	L 0-2	0-1	19	Robinson 17, Carroll 40, Durham 80
Dec 23	Sutton United	2128	GMVC	H	W 1-0	0-0	14	West 79
Dec 30	Cheltenham Town	1153	GMVC	A	W 2-1	1-1	14	Robinson 17, Guppy 21, West 82 (pen)
Jan 1	Sutton United	2166	GMVC	H	L 0-4	0-2	12	West 3 (pen)
Jan 6	Telford United	1745	GMVC	A	W 3-2	2-1	13	Creaser 16, Carroll 28, West 46
Jan 9	Flackwell Heath	1345	GMVC	H	L 1-4	0-1	13	Stapleton 43, West 60
Jan 13	Metropolitan Police	843	B&BSCS	A	W 3-0	2-0	-	West 36
Jan 20	Barrow	1128	FATT	H	L 1-3	1-2	-	Guppy 6, West 64 (pen), 66
Jan 23	Merthyr Tydfil	1178	GMVC	A	W 2-1	2-0	12	Carroll 32
Jan 27	Macclesfield Town	703	BLT2	H	W 3-0	2-0	12	Lambert 15, Carroll 84
Feb 10	Merthyr Tydfil	2002	GMVC	A	D 1-1	1-0	13	West 16, Lambert 70
Feb 15	Windsor & Eton	1251	GMVC	H	D 1-1	1-0	13	West 80
Feb 20	Welling United	1745	B&BSCS2	A	W 1-0	0-0	11	Lambert 112, West 119
Feb 27	Kettering Town	1996	GMVC	H	D 2-2	1-1	10	West 7
Mar 3	Macclesfield Town	1210	GMVC	A	L 0-1	0-0	10	Carroll 12, West 56 (pen), Lambert 57, 66
Mar 7	Chesham United	1200	B&BSCSF	H	W 2-0	0-0	10	A Kerr 37, Durham 80
Mar 10	Enfield	1740	GMVC	A	W 1-0	0-0	9	Dowkins 16 (o.g.)
Mar 14	Boston United	1425	BLT3	H	W 2-0*	0-0	11	Lambert 2, Carroll 62, 70, Lambert 109
Mar 17	Cheltenham Town	1411	GMVC	A	D 1-1	1-1	10	Carroll 92, Lambert 107
Mar 24	Charley	1706	GMVC	H	W 4-0	1-0	10	Thorpe 75
Mar 27	Kidderminster Harriers	3707	BLT3/LEG1	A	W 2-0	0-1	10	Stapleton 70
Apr 4	Yeovil Town	1403	GMVC	H	L 1-2	1-0	10	Carroll 2
Apr 10	Darlington	1556	BLT3/LEG1	A	W 3-2*	0-0	12	West 10, Carroll 20
Apr 14	Slough Town	4297	GMVC	H	W 1-0	0-0	10	Smith 30, Thorpe 80
Apr 16	Farnborough Town	1567	B&BSCF	A	W 2-1*	0-0	-	
Apr 21	Fisher Athletic	2268	GMVC	H	W 1-0	0-0	10	
Apr 23	Farnborough Town	838	GMVC	A	L 1-3	0-0	10	
Apr 25	Runcorn	1925	GMVC	H	D 1-1	1-0	11	
Apr 30	Stafford Rangers	650	GMVC	A	W 2-0	0-1	12	
May 3	Altrincham	1820	GMVC	H	W 2-1	2-1	10	
May 5	* After extra time	541	GMVC	A	W 1-1	1-1	10	

* At Hungerford Town

1989/90 - THE LAST SEASON

by Dave Finch

After the achievements of the previous season, the last ever campaign at Loakes Park was looked forward to with an air of optimism. However, Sean Norman and Keith Barrett had departed to pastures new, while injuries to Nicky Evans and Martin Blackler, both of whom were to miss most of the season, meant that they were also missing from the opening game. On top of this, USA international John Kerr had decided to finish out the season in his home country. The team travelled to Northwich for the opening game with new signings Simon Stapleton (from Bristol Rovers), Paul Sanderson (Newport County), Paul Franklin (Reading) and ex-Chelsea and QPR stalwart Steve Wicks. To the disappointment of all concerned they came back with a conclusive 3-0 defeat.

Two days later, Bank Holiday Monday, the first home game saw Altrincham sneak a point with a last-minute equaliser after Wycombe had had enough of the game to have won comfortably. The lack of a striking partner for Mark West was already becoming a cause for concern as 2,620 spectators (Wycombe's largest home league gate of the season) witnessed the 0-1 home defeat by newcomers Darlington and after only three games the club was languishing in 21st place. An encouraging draw, 0-0, at Welling was followed by another single goal defeat at Stafford, where Kevin Durham hobbled off with a hamstring injury.

Young striker David Gipp was signed on loan from Barnet in time for the home match with Merthyr Tydfil. Unfortunately, after an early goal by Andy Kerr, playing upfront, the game was abandoned due to what can only be described as a torrential rainstorm. Also appearing at this stage for the first time was Steve Guppy, a young winger who had appeared in the Capital League - side the previous season.

The first win of the season came in the next game at Baldock (F.A. Cup, First Qualifying Round) where Andy Kerr and Mark West scored in a 2-0 win. This was to be the prelude to an amazing spell of goalscoring. The following Tuesday night saw a thoroughly entertaining first league win at Enfield with fullback Simon Stapleton scoring twice in the 5-3 triumph. Then came an incredible match at home to Kidderminster, which saw the return of John Kerr, albeit for just a month while he sorted out a deal to play in France. With 18 minutes left, Wycombe trailed 3-0, Mark West pulled two back and then, in the last minute,

Kerr, himself, dived to head home the equaliser. Unfortunately, the match also saw the sending off of Glyn Creaser and Harriers' Sugrue. To coincide with Kerr's return, Paul Sanderson departed, joining Cheltenham Town.

The goals continued to flow as September came to an end. Mark West grabbed a hat-trick in a 6-1 home win over Fisher Athletic while John Kerr netted twice to rescue Wycombe in a scrappy 3-1 win over Boreham Wood in the F.A. Cup.

October saw an extremely unlucky 0-1 defeat in a tremendous performance at Kettering and this was followed by possibly the best game of the season, a superb 5-0 win over Runcorn at Loakes Park which saw David Gipp score in his last appearance before returning to Barnet. Also departing was Steve Wicks due to business commitments. A new signing at this point was Robert Thorpe from Bracknell.

A break from competitive football saw a strong Tottenham XI come to Loakes Park in aid of Gary Lester's testimonial. A bumper crowd of 2,829 saw Paul Walsh Inspire Spurs to a 3-1 win. Three 1-1 draws followed in uninspiring matches. Two F.A. Cup games against Gravesend were followed by a home league match with Telford, which saw John Granville sustain an injury and Matt Crossley take over in goal. Nicky Evans made a welcome return in this match and was on the scoresheet in the next, a second visit to Gravesend where a comfortable 3-0 win was rewarded by a trip to Stafford in the Fourth Qualifying Round. Unfortunately, a poor performance at a windswept Marston Road saw Wycombe tumble to a 1-4 defeat.

November began with two league defeats, by another single goal at Chorley in atrocious conditions and then at home to Yeovil when a makeshift side lost 1-2, to a controversial goal four minutes from the end. John Kerr had by now gone to France, while Matt Crossley and Andy Robinson were both missing with injuries. Wycombe were now 19th in the table and, on the 11th of the month, played bottom club Boston at Loakes Park. A Steve Guppy goal in the 81st minute was greeted by a huge sigh of relief in a scrappy game. The following week a Dave Carroll inspired performance saw a good 4-0 win over Barrow and a move five places up the table. This was followed by the announcement of a new signing, Martin Lambert, from Brighton. However, a disastrous spell saw Wycombe concede eleven goals in the next four games,

with defeats at Yeovil and Boston and at home to Merthyr. The only point came in a 3-3 draw at Loakes Park against Northwich, the Vic's scoring twice in the last 15 minutes to level. To make matters worse, Glyn Creaser sustained a broken toe at Yeovil and Martin Lambert broke his nose against Merthyr, although he continued to play with the injury. Although not widely publicised Gary Lester, a long-serving and very popular player left for neighbours Slough Town during this time. Amazingly, after all of these disasters Wycombe recovered to gain a well-deserved 1-0 win over championship contenders Barnet at Loakes Park with a well-taken goal by newcomer Lambert. Ricky Pearson, a fullback on loan from Gillingham, made his debut in this game. 1989 ended and 1990 started with two wins over Sutton with a crushing 0-4 defeat at home to Cheltenham sandwiched in between, plus the disappointing news that Nicky Evans was having trouble with his knee and further surgery was likely. This was in fact the last we were to see of him for the season.

It was becoming increasingly obvious that things were not all well amongst the squad and the first Saturday of the New Year saw a thumping 1-4 defeat at Telford, with Martin Lambert being sent off. Although there was a County Cup win at Flackwell Heath, the last straw came at home to Metropolitan Police in the F.A. Trophy, Wycombe's last hope of any notable success for the season. The Vauxhall League Division one side totally outplayed Wycombe to win 3-1. Following the match, Jim Kelman resigned as manager while Glyn Creaser put in a transfer request. With the Board in no hurry to announce a replacement, John Reardon took charge for the visit to Barrow the following week. With Barrow unbeaten at home and Wycombe having to sign two players, (Gary Smith from Enfield and Paul O'Driscoll from Swindon), to make up the thirteen, hopes were not high. Incredibly, goals from Glyn Creaser, Dave Carroll and an own goal saw the Blues return with a three-goal victory. This signalled a run of thirteen wins and only one defeat and the news that Creaser and West had withdrawn their transfer requests.

The next game saw them gain revenge at home over Merthyr Tydfil in the Bob Lord Trophy with goals from Matt Crossley and Mark West in a 2-0 win. After drawing 1-1 with Macclesfield at Loakes Park it was announced that Martin O'Neill,



Back Row: Geoff Sutton, John Goldsworthy, Roger Schofield, Jim Melvin, Matt Crossley, Paul Franklin, Nicky Evans, Dave Carroll, Glynn Creaser, Martin Blackler, Dave Jones, Rod Lavers, Allan Robson, Dave Hutton.

Middle Row: John Simmonds, Martin O'Neill, Steve Guppy, Andy Robinson, John Granville, Gary Smith, Andy Kerr, Ricky Pearson, Martin Lambert, Kevin Durham, Mark West, Robert Thorpe, Simon Stapleton, John Reardon.

Front Row: Bob Hart, Bill Cleere, Graham Peart, Gerald Cox, Alan Hutchinson, Jack Adams, Ivor Beeks, Monty Seymour, John Roberts, Brian Lee, Gordon Richards, Alan Parry, Reg Haff.

ex-Northern Ireland International was to be the new Team Manager. He took charge at Merthyr in another encouraging 1-1 draw. Mark West, in great goalscoring form, once more on the scoresheet. Three home matches then saw February out. In the Berks & Bucks Senior Cup, Windsor were beaten more comfortably than the 3-2 scoreline suggests, two late goals rather flattering the visitors. A Dave Carroll goal was enough to defeat Welling, while the same player scored a late equaliser to earn a 2-2 draw with Kettering in a highly entertaining game. Wycombe were safely placed in mid-table now and, although March began with their first defeat under Martin O'Neill, yet another by a single goal at Macclesfield, home wins over Enfield (1-0) and Chorley (4-0) and a useful 1-1 draw at Cheltenham consolidated this position. Mark West was on the scoresheet in all three of these games and was striking up a good partnership with Martin Lambert, who was beginning to answer his critics on the terraces in the best possible way. The two of them also shared the goals as further progress was made in both the Berks & Bucks Senior Cup and the Bob Lord Trophy. First of all, there was a 2-0 win on a hard, bumpy pitch at Chesham and then the same score, after extra time, at Boston a week later. A busy month ended with a midweek defeat at Barnet (0-2) in front of a crowd of 3,707 and then a good win at Kidderminster, also 2-0, with goals from Andy Kerr and Kevin Durham. Unfortunately, Andy Robinson was stretchered off at Barnet with torn ligaments, an injury

which kept him out for the rest of the season. As a reward for his efforts, Martin O'Neill was named as Mail on Sunday's Manager of the Month.

April opened with the two-legged semi-final of the Bob Lord Trophy against Yeovil. The first leg, at Huish, saw Wycombe take an early lead through a Dawkins own goal and, with this score still standing and five minutes left, things looked good for the return leg. However, Yeovil, who have been a thorn in Wycombe's side over the years, scored twice in those remaining minutes. The second leg a week later was just as dramatic. Two goals by Dave Carroll midway through the second-half looked to have secured Wycombe a place in the Final. Unfortunately, an 89th minute goal by Spencer sent the game into extra time. A superb shot by Lambert put Wycombe 3-1 up and ahead on aggregate, only for Dent to immediately reply at the other end. Although level on aggregate, Yeovil went through on the away goals rule.

The following Saturday Wycombe travelled north to table toppers Darlington and immediately shook off their disappointments with a 1-0 win in front of a 4,297 crowd. Martin Lambert scored in the second minute, with Wycombe valiantly holding out for the rest of the game. Two days later, on Easter Monday, Dave Carroll and Martin Lambert scored extra time goals at Hungerford to record a 2-1 win over Slough in the Berks & Bucks Senior Cup Final. Although it was a rather uninspiring game on a blustery afternoon it gave Martin O'Neill his first taste of success.

The rest of the month saw Wycombe have a say in the relegation battle with three games in five days, two against Farnborough. A first league goal by Robert Thorpe, after coming on as substitute, saw Wycombe win 1-0 at Loakes Park, with the return at Farnborough finishing 1-1. In between these two games, there was a surprise 1-3 defeat at Fisher which was to help keep the London side up. With so many games being crammed into such a short spell it was no surprise that a long trip to Runcorn on a Monday evening, the last day of April, resulted in a 2-0 defeat. Three days later, Thursday, May 3rd, was the end of an era. It was the last competitive game ever to be played at Loakes Park. A crowd of 1,818 saw Stafford's Cavell score in the first minute but goals by Mark West and Dave Carroll secured Wycombe a 2-1 win. They repeated this scoreline two days later at Altrincham in the last league game of the season with goals from Gary Smith, his first for the club, and Robert Thorpe.

The last ever match on the ground was on the afternoon of Monday, May 7th when Martin O'Neill's International XI, including George Best, Mark Lawrenson, John Robertson and Martin himself, won 8-4 in front of almost 5,000 spectators. It was an emotional occasion with the crowd staying on the pitch long after the game had finished.

Overall, it was a disappointing season but there were sufficient signs that Wycombe's first season at Adams Park could be a good one under Martin O'Neill.

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President

J. Norton	1888 - 1891
R. S. Wood	1891 - 1908
C. W. Deacon	1908 - 1913
Marquis of Lincolnshire	1913 - 1928
Marchioness of Lincolnshire	1928 - 1929
G.T. Miles	1929 - 1943
C.P. Vine	1943 - 1954
J. Timberlake	1954 - 1964
G. Hodsdon	1964 - 1966
M. E. Seymour	1966 -

Secretary

J. Ray	1887 - 1891
F. Jennings	1891 - 1893
C. Harper	1893 - 1908
J. N. F. Vale	1908 - 1910
B. C. Hooper	1910 - 1925
W. Howland	1925 - 1928
R. H. Gardner	1928 - 1935
W. Howland	1935 - 1936
R. G. Boreham	1936 - 1949
W. J. Hayter	1949 - 1969
A. J. Crump	1969 - 1975
A. J. Mahoney	1975 - 1975
J. Goldsworthy	1975 - 1989
A. Hutchinson	1989 - 1990
J. Goldsworthy	1990 -

Chairman

W. Dimmock	1898 - 1900
C. W. Deacon	1900 - 1902
R. Howland	1902 - 1913
C. W. Deacon	1913 - 1932
G. T. Miles	1932 - 1951
R. Spatchett	1951 - 1954
J. Timberlake	1954 - 1956
G. Partridge	1956 - 1965
E. L. Webb	1965 - 1975
J. Smethurst	1975 - 1981
R. H. Williams	1981 - 1988
B. R. Lee	1988 -
I. L. Beeks	

Treasurer

G. Cook	1887 - 1890
W. Pearce	1890 - 1895
C. Harper	1895 - 1896
R. Howland, Jnr.	1896 - 1898
G. T. Miles	1898 - 1926
G. R. Bunce	1926 - 1963
A. Rackstraw	1963 - 1968
R. G. Maskell	1968 - 1969
R. N. Lee	1969 - 1975
A. F. Ward	1975 - 1977
G. B. Cox	1977 - 1988
G. F. Peart	1988 -

AMATEUR INTERNATIONAL CAPS

The following players were awarded Amateur International Caps whilst playing for Wycombe Wanderers:-

England

P. A. Bates	J. Lalley
R. W. Boreham	E. W. Powell
J. J. Delaney	L. Pritchard
R. Eaton	T. Reardon
D. Edwards	K. Searle
P. M. Fuschillo	P. J. Suddaby
D. Gamblin	L. F. Worley
A. Horseman	

Wales

G. Anthony	J. Fisher
D. Evans	A. V. Grace

CLUB RECORDS

Most Appearances:

Tony Horseman - 900

Most Goals:

Tony Horseman - 525

Highest Attendance:

15,850 v St. Albans City

(F.A. Amateur Cup 1950)

Highest Win:

18-1 v Staines Town 1909

Highest Defeat:

15-0 v Watford 1898



Bestle upstaged!



George Best honours Wycombe Wanderers.





Dave Carroll (out of picture) scores the last goal at Loakes Park as Kevin Durham watches.



Supporters shopping for mementoes



The final whistle

The picture tells a story







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